

Remarks

Reconsideration and allowance of this application, as amended, are respectfully requested.

The written description portion of the specification, the abstract of the disclosure, and claims 1-11 have been amended. New claims 12-18 have been added. Claims 1-18 are now pending in the application. Claims 1, 12, and 16 are independent. The sole rejection is respectfully submitted to be obviated in view of the amendments and remarks presented herein. No new matter has been introduced through the foregoing amendments.

Applicant acknowledges with gratitude the examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in claims 2-5 and 7-11.

The specification has been editorially amended for conformance with 37 CFR § 1.77(c), for consistency, and to correct any informalities. The abstract has been editorially amended for conformance with 37 CFR § 1.72(b). Claims 1-11 have been amended to more fully comply with U.S. practice. Claims 1 and 10 have also been amended to overcome the objection to the drawings. New claims 12-18 have been added to further define the scope of protection sought for Applicant's invention.

Claim 1 has also been amended to further emphasize structural characteristics of the harness, i.e., that each of the two strap loops passes separately around a respective shoulder of

the harness wearer, and that the fastener is slidable in a longitudinal direction along the strap loops.

Entry of each of the amendments is respectfully requested.

35 U.S.C. § 102(b) - Higuchi

Claims 1 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by US 5,934,528 to Higuchi.

The rejection under § 102(b) based on Higuchi is respectfully deemed to be obviated. For at least the following reasons, the disclosure of Higuchi does not anticipate Applicant's invention as presently claimed.

By way of review, Applicant's invention is directed to a child harness that "includes a child carrying pouch which is positioned on the front side of the harness, so as to be supported on the chest side of the wearer, and that further includes *two strap loops which pass around respective shoulders of the wearer and which loops are mutually fastened by means of a fastener means on the rear side of the harness*" (specification page 1, lines 7-11) (emphasis added).

A problem with prior art child carrying devices is that "[i]n those instances when a child harness is used by different persons on alternate occasions, (by mother and father for instance), it is difficult to adjust the strap fastener means to a

position which is best for the wearer concerned at that time, with respect to the load to which he or she is subjected" (specification page 1, lines 25-28). Therefore, an object of Applicant's invention "is to provide a child harness with which the fastener means can be readily adjusted to a position that is comfortable to the wearer" (specification page 1, lines 30-31).

Accordingly, the child harness defined by Applicant's instant claim 1 includes in pertinent part "two strap loops which pass separately around respective shoulders of the wearer, the loops being mutually fastened by a fastener on a rear side of the harness."

Higuchi's "Waist Bag" is structurally and functionally different from Applicant's claimed invention. Higuchi fails to disclose Applicant's claimed "two strap loops which pass separately around respective shoulders of the wearer." As is evident from Higuchi's Figure 1, and even more evident from Higuchi's Figures 7a, 7B, and 8, Higuchi discloses a bag having a single "shoulder strap 60" (column 3, line 43) that is worn over one shoulder of the user. That is not Applicant's presently claimed invention.

Similarly, Higuchi fails to disclose Applicant's claimed fastener that mutually fastens the two separate loops on the rear side of the harness. The Office Action asserts that Higuchi teaches a "fastener means (63)." In fact, however, Higuchi simply discloses "an adjuster 63" (see Higuchi Figure 1) with which "[t]he

whole length of the shoulder strap 60 can be roughly adjusted" (column 5, lines 56-58). Higuchi's strap length adjuster is completely different from Applicant's claimed fastener that fastens the two separate loops on the rear side of the harness.

Finally, contrary to the assertion in the Office Action, Higuchi contains no disclosure whatsoever of Applicant's claimed features of "the strap of each loop having a longitudinally extending thickened edge on mutually adjacent edges of the loops on the rear side of the harness, and the fastener having along each of two opposite edges an undercut groove which slidably receives a respective edge thickening of the adjacent strap loops to allow the fastener to slide in a longitudinal direction along the straps of the loops." It is by virtue of these features that Applicant's harness meets an object of the invention, i.e., providing "a child harness with which the fastener means can be readily adjusted to a position that is comfortable to the wearer."

Since Higuchi does not meet each feature of the presently claimed invention, Higuchi does not anticipate the invention defined by Applicant's claims 1 and 6. Claims 2-5 and 7-11 are allowable because they depend from claim 1, and because they each include an additional feature not taught by Higuchi.

New claims 12-18 have been added to further define the scope of protection sought for Applicant's invention. New claims 12-18 are also allowable. Since each of independent claims 12 and


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16 includes at least the features discussed above, Higuchi neither anticipates nor would have rendered obvious the child harness defined by any of new claims 12-18.

In view of the foregoing, this application is now in condition for allowance. If the examiner believes that an interview might expedite prosecution, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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